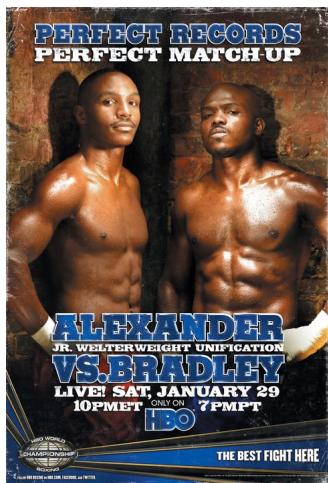


BORGES: It's Time For Boxing To Create New Heroes

Written by Ron Borges

Thursday, 13 January 2011 23:14



In boxing, as in life, timing is everything. Timothy Bradley figured that out a long time ago.

After being stripped of the WBC light welterweight title for allegedly ducking Devon Alexander 18 months ago, Bradley was accused of refusing to risk his future. Alexander went on to lay claim to the belt Bradley once wore while Bradley cited business considerations and Alexander's low profile as the reason he opted out to pursue what he hoped would be bigger paydays.

As Bradley went off to lay claim to the WBO title but far less money than he'd hoped, Alexander's profile grew and now, come Jan. 29, they will square off in a unification fight in Detroit that is being talked about as one of the biggest fights between two American champions in years. If Bradley was ducking anyone it doesn't look or sound like it any more.

"The zero on my record doesn't matter to me," Bradley (26-0, 11 KO) said. "My biggest goal in boxing is just to be remembered. I don't want to be forgotten about. Whether I win seven or eight world championships, that will be in the history books and I just want to be remembered. That is my biggest goal. You do that by fighting the best.

"I will become the best by fighting the best and giving the boxing fans the best fights out there that can possible be made. I am sick of fighting average guys. The top 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 – let's go. Win this fight, who's next? (Amir) Khan? Let's go. After Khan, (Manuel) Maidana, let's go. After him...(Juan Manuel) Marquez. There are so many fights out there to be made at 140.

"I think the fighters are willing to fight but their handlers or promoters are not willing to make the fight. It will be a task because if you are not a part of their team they do not want to fight you. I don't know why that's the way it is but that's the way it is. They won't give you a chance and that's what's killing boxing."

What will save boxing – if saving it truly needs – are fights like Bradley-Alexander. Along with Khan, Maidana and Marquez, they are the five best 140 pound boxers in the world and the

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world knows it. There is only one way to prove that however, and if they all agree to try, what will result is the same kind of buzz presently circulating around Alexander and Bradley.

Time will tell if any of them really gets this but Bradley certainly sounded this week like a fighter who finally does. So, too, did Alexander, who has always seemed willing to face anyone if his promoter, Don King, would let him off the leash.

For this fight he has and the winner will be sitting both at the top of the division and with obvious opponents in front of him with whom he can make serious money and a bigger reputation. Whether that happens only time will tell but you can't take the next step until you take the first one and that comes when these two climb up the three steps leading into the ring at the Silverdome.

"Nobody knows who is number one (in the division) until we get in the ring," Bradley refreshingly said during a conference call with the boxing media this week.

For once he was not a champion claiming to be the be all and end all of his weight class without having taken on the most obvious challengers to prove his point. To say it was refreshing was like saying Detroit is cold in January. Obvious but still important to understand.

"The winner of these two fights will definitely have to fight Amir Khan," Bradley continued. "If they don't do it, the media should put the pressure on them because I think that's the way it should go. I think we all should get a shot at each other.

"Styles make fights and on any given night, you know you might be in there with the wrong style and you might get beat. We should do a round robin. I should get a shot at Amir; Devon should get a shot at Amir. He should get a shot at Maidana and I should get a shot at Maidana. Like back in the old days with Sugar Ray Leonard, Tommy Hearns and Marvin Hagler – they all went at it a couple of times.

"Alexis Arguello and Aaron Pryor – they went at it a couple of times. Let's do that - the best fighting the best. Muhammad Ali fought Joe Frazier three times. That's what boxing needs to bring it back."

Bradley is right. Those names he mentioned became NAMES only because they took great personal risks to make it so. They became NAMES because they fought each other.

Leonard without Hearns, Duran and Hagler would not have been as sweet. Ali without Frazier would have been like salt without pepper. Same of Arguello and Pryor. They are all joined together in shared greatness, the loser really winning as well. They all risked much to gain the kind of immortality that still has fight fans talking about them well into their dotage.

If Timothy Bradley, Amir Khan, Devon Alexander or anyone else in boxing today – including Mann Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather, Jr. – hope to have that same kind of longevity, the kind that transcends a man's final fight, there is only one way to get it. It is only with the acceptance of great risk that boxing offers up its greatest reward.

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That reward is a life beyond living. A life that lives in the lore of the sport long after the fighters themselves have faded and all that's left of them is the memories they created. Timothy Bradley and Devon Alexander will be trying to create memories for a new generation of fans on Jan 29, knowing there is only one way to do it – risk all you have.

“This is a huge fight,” Bradley said. “I don't know on what scale everyone else out there sees this fight but this is the biggest fight of my career and Devon's career. It shows what type of fighters we are. We are young and both in our prime and you rarely ever see two undefeated guys – two world champions – two Americans, fight each other. You rarely see that and it's come down to this.

“I am seeded No. 1 and he has to prove to the world that he is better than I am. That's going to be a hell of a challenge. I'm hungry to show the world that I am the best 140-pounder out there. This division is loaded and I feel I am the best. I've got to prove it on January 29th.”

That is the essence of what long made boxing one of America's most popular sports. It is why the biggest crowd in the schoolyard even today is around two young boys trying to prove who's the toughest kid in the fifth grade.

Too often in recent years boxers and the men who manage and promote them seem to have forgotten that. They mistake empty victories, undefeated records and phony title belts for achievement. Boxing has always been about proving who the better man is, which is why one champion out of many is always the sport's greatest selling point.

Timothy Bradley and Devon Alexander will be trying to prove who that man is at 140 pounds come Jan. 29. When they're done the proving won't be finished however.

There will still be Khan and Maidana and Marquez waiting for them both. If the men who promote them will can simply get out of the way and allow them to face each other they'll be surprised about two things.

One will become a superstar and they'll all get paid more than once because the public doesn't care about how many fights you've won as much as they do how you got those wins.

“I do think the state of boxing right now is at a low,” Bradley said quite rightly, “until you have great fights like this in the 140 division. I think it's going to bring it back. We are the most talented division in boxing and we are going to bring it back just like the old days. If it's an awesome fight like I think it's going to be we are going to do it again for the boxing fans and for the world. This is the best fight in boxing because you are not going to see Manny and Floyd fight any time soon.”

It's time for boxing to create new heroes and there's only one way to do it. The old-fashioned way. Put them at risk and see how survives.

[Comment on this article](#)

Radam G says:

Timmy Bradley reminds me of a mini, surly Long Tall Paul Williams. Da sucka Dessert Salad -- I mean Desert Storm -- got one serious chip, NO! A boulder on his shoulder. WTP! That darn stone has apparently slipped off Bradley shoulder and popped da fudge upside his dome or sumpin! Dude with a tude never quits his delusional yakking and rhetorically attacking reality. He ought to quit altering reality because he is not an attraction or "old school," as he claim. As he is getting beat down, don't be surprised that he gets out of the bout by butting or fouling Alexander Da Great somehow. Bradley could not sell out the tiny casino arena in his own locale. This is a fight between two not-well known green fighters. Other than hardcore boxing fans, not many people know Bradley outside of Palm Springs, and not too many people know Devon outside of da Lou. And this so obvious!

They are fighting in the 80,000-seat Silverdome and have only sold a little over 300 tickets since the tickets went on sell on December 10. "What's going," in the words of the song of the late, great Soul singer, Marvin Gaye? HBO got some type of uncover deal going on with Don King. I don't know what it is. But this bout being in Detroit is not making any type of money sense. Not even to the GBG Manny Steward. As he said, "Knok is not a fight town, but a Knok's town." Not many dang Detroit residents and Michiganites are going to drive out in cold weather to see two strangers to them featured as the main event. The locals are going to catch the bout on HBO like everybody else. Unless Emimen, The Temptations, Arthea Franklin, Diana Ross, Jay-Z, Puff Daddy, Kanye West, Lady Gaga and the Ojays are going to give a surprised concert before or maybe after the boxing card, this event will BE full of empty and comp seats. Holla!

Isaiah says:

Wow, I can't hardly believe what I've been reading about WELTERWEIGHT Andre Berto. See, all this time, I thought it was the likes of Tim Bradley, Devon Alexander and Amir Khan trying to clean out the 140 pound division. Instead, it's apparently 147 pounder Berto who thought the fans needed a replacement for Floyd Mayweather's inactivity and Andre has decided to reward us by beating on a murder's row of 140 pounders to pad his record fluffier than the best pillows around. Dang Andre, you trying to give Mayweather a run for his money on best joke in boxing around? Not only have you refused to give worthy Luis Collazo a rematch that you know he has earned and then some, besides him, you felt like beating on smaller men left and right. What is this?! Steve Forbes? Carlos Quintana? Juan Urango and then everyone's favorite BUM Freddy Hernandez?!.... Wow, only Freddy was close to your size and we all know how much of a threat he was, right? LOL!And you have the audacity to insult Sugar Shane Mosley?! PLEEEEEEASE!!!! Look at his resume and then look at yours! Andre, you ever beat a Fernando Vargas, PRIME Oscar De La Hoya, Antonio Margarito or let me see.... LUIS COLLAZO? NOT from what I saw!And your next opponent is (::drum roll please: 140 pounder Victor Ortiz! LOL! WTF! Gentlemen, any reason this man hasn't fought a Mosley, Cotto or Margarito yet? Don't you think when he was signed to fight Mosley the first time, he would have done a lot more good to go through with the fight and donate part of his purse to the Haiti victims?! This is

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NOT a good look. I now bestow Andre Berto as the latest inDUCktee in the COWARD awards along side the likes of Julio Ceaser Chavez Jr, Floyd Mayweather Jr, Alexander Povetkin, N. Valuev and David Haye. May they enjoy the hall of shame and get rewarded being the best in the business at ducking all legit threats and chickening out of major fights. I mean, Victor Ortiz next?.... Are you serious Berto? Are you really going to disrespect Shane Mosley and then act like a top 20 welterweight is nowhere to be found for your next fight?

ultimoshogun says:

In the movie Troy, a young boy says to Achilles.. "That Thessalonian you're fighting is the biggest man i've ever seen, I wouldn't want to fight him."...to which Achilles replies.. "That's why no one will remember your name."...I'm glad Bradley is willing to fight the best out there, wish more fighters would think like him...Only time will tell if we'll remember Timothy Bradley.

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In the movie Troy, a young boy says to Achilles.. "That Thessalonian you're fighting is the biggest man i've ever seen, I wouldn't want to fight him."..to which Achilles replies.. "That's why no one will remember your name."...I'm glad Bradley is willing to fight the best out there, we need more guys like him in boxing...Only time will tell if we'll remember Timothy Bradley.

Joe says:

"If The Money's Right" - I think the first time I heard that phrase was right after "The Greatest" won the title from Liston.....and things haven't changed since. It would be nice if we could get all the fights we want to see (and I can name a few) but as a fan(atic) I give these "prizefighters" a pass. I'm not the one getting the shizzle beat out of me in the gym and the prize ring.

FighterforJC says:

Actually, before creating new heroes, boxing should start by not trying to destroy its current heroes. Pacquiao came along and brought electricity to the sport unheard of since a prime Mike Tyson, and instead of celebrating him, many jealous boxing writers jumped on the Mayweather's PED accusation bandwagon. There won't be another Pacquiao just like there won't be another Ali or Tyson or Ray Leonard. There'd be plenty of Mayweathers, though. We'll see plenty of cuties emerge whose primary goal is to not get hit and find great success with it. I commend Bradley and Alexander for taking on each other, but I can't really give them that much credit. It's not like they have any choice. They have to fight each other or nobody will watch their fights. They have little to lose. I respect Alexander a little more because he doesn't feel the need to degrade other fighters in order to elevate his own status.

MisterLee says:

Best fight to be made in boxing today besides pacquiao mayweather which will never happen. If pacquiao ever does take the drug test, next would be for him to walk in first with a dress on, which will make pac a homophobe if he doesn't agree, to "clean up the homophobia in boxing"

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b/c that's "what I'm all about, fighting for the fa... i mean homosexuals"... then next would be a bigger purse... anything except for Mayweather to actually fight pac in his prime... Mayweather came out of retirement to fight a 36 year old lightweight, and a 38 year old welterweight, i guess pac has to way 6-7 more years before Mayweather challenges him for real. Bradley is the future, Pacquiao is the present, Mayweather was the past. Bradley is the truth, Pacquiao was the truth, Mayweather never knew what that was.

admin says:

You make solid points...These are two classy cats, I root for them both.....[QUOTE=FighterforJC;984]Actually, before creating new heroes, boxing should start by not trying to destroy its current heroes. Pacquiao came along and brought electricity to the sport unheard of since a prime Mike Tyson, and instead of celebrating him, many jealous boxing writers jumped on the Mayweather's PED accusation bandwagon. There won't be another Pacquiao just like there won't be another Ali or Tyson or Ray Leonard. There'd be plenty of Mayweathers, though. We'll see plenty of cuties emerge whose primary goal is to not get hit and find great success with it. I commend Bradley and Alexander for taking on each other, but I can't really give them that much credit. It's not like they have any choice. They have to fight each other or nobody will watch their fights. They have little to lose. I respect Alexander a little more because he doesn't feel the need to degrade other fighters in order to elevate his own status.[/QUOTE]

Isaiah says:

@MisterLee. Manny taking the drug test hasn't been the slightest concern in a long while. Go to google and look up "Manny agrees to random drug testing" or something along those lines and you should be able to find an article where Manny says something like, "I have no problem with taking a blood test all the way up to the fight or even up to the 6th round if Mayweather so desires. I just want this fight!" Mayweather and his fans just put their fingers in their ears, pretend Manny didn't say anything and keep on repeating the "take the test" line. Trick made COWARD Floyd will next be requesting blood testing inbetween rounds. They could dissect Manny limb from limb, find nothing of course and STILL claim Manny MUST be hiding those darn PED's SOMEWHERE on him because OBVIOUSLY the commission can't do their jobs, but oh, no other fighters are demanded such INSANE testing requirements. It's a shame a small percantage of the public STILL is going on with Wifebeater Jr. and his drugged out families lies. What is good enough testing protocol then, why isn't the commission enforcing it if it's SO good and why isn't anyone else being demanded to "take the test." If Manny does a test every few minutes, some idiot will say, "well.... you all know there's steroids that dissappear within 60 seconds...." LOL! It's funny Mayweather uses the homosexual insults being that he ironically seems to have his parts always jammed down several "men's throats."

MisterLee says:

You know, all in all, I love this fight. But I really hope Money Pacquiao, after \$ugar \$hane Mo\$ley, will face someone meaningful, even in their prime. The same goes for Money May, if he doesn't fight pacquiao, who cares? Fight sergio martinez, or cotto, or margarito, i'd pay for may

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to fight someone with a pulse in their prime, even berto, but enough of the cherry picking, this is the first time I'm accusing Money Pac of cherry picking, but it's a real disrespect to boxing and the fans, but let's see some fireworks this year, I'm pretty confident Bradley has a good chance of outboxing Money, and if he does, i'm sure Chop chop bodyguard Mayweather will jump in and take a poop on their parade, or even just shout bradley and pac on PED's from sideline. All good, I think we've seen the last of money may, and i think pac's got 2011 and 2012 ahead of him before he retires or should retire. After that, Andre Ward 2011!

Radam G says:

Sup? MisterLee. Go to Youtube and holla at "Max and Sam Rumble Young Man." That would be the Max Kellerman and his late, bro [my boy] Sam. Man, I missed that guy. Just check out Max shaved dome. The sucka looks like a baldheaded Vanilla Ice. In the rap video, I make a quick appearance - Funny as heck! Enjoy! Holla!

brownsugar says:

New Heroes... we need em... as much as I enjoy watching the impecable, asthetically pleasing, and mellifluous execution of Floyd Mayweather Jr, he's seems to drifting dangerously away from having any relevancy in the sport. And while Floyd slowly fades away from the scene Pacman is faced with the challenge of finding a marketable name in division he's basically all but cleaned out. This irony is compounded by promoters seeking to pit their fighters against names instead of able challengers. (as the author and TSS has already stated).... But the root of the problem is that Boxing is no longer the key marquee sport of the olympics... now viewers are more content to watch Schlolom racers streaking down snow capped mountains and teary eyed rhymic gymnasts accepting a bouquet of roses at the winners podium.. During WWII and especially the "Cold War" with the Soviets, the sport of Boxing represented America's might. People tuned in because boxing was an analogy of War,... if we kick your butts in the Olympics... what do you think our Armies will do to you??. Fans identified with and projected themselves into the victories or our once outstanding team(isn't America Great??)... But the public is fickle.. ring deaths,..the anti-boxing movement, and an increasingly poor economy has castrated funding for amateur boxing. This is where promoters and even the weathly philanthropists who enjoy the sport should rebuild and invest in the faltering amateur circuit on a national level. the building blocks of Boxing Heroes is the amateurs, who are currently operating on a shoe-string budget... with Fathers substituting for experience coaches and boxers having sell candy and hold fund raising rallys to earn enough money for a greyhound bus ticket to get to camp. Sure you get a few standout naturally gifted athletes... but not nearly enough to bring the attention of a Nation back to the sport. Simply put... the U.S. needs another dominating Olympic Team.

Radam G says:

@B-Sug! Don't listen ta da music of dat violin. Amateur boxing now has its own professional league of world male pugilism. Holla at WSB -- World Series of Boxing. I don't know why a lot of bodddeeessss are always sneezing on boxing and trying to give it a fatal cold or sumpin.' But the game has a strong immune system against marginalization and demise. Deep-pocket supporters are everywhere -- around da GLOBE! Broadcasting and scribbling of the sweet

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science's death have been GREATLY X-eggeRATED. The game is coming into some MEAN and Mad money with this WSB, and with Female boxing making it's debate in the Olympic Games next year. YUP! Oh, YUP! And now with Big Money O and GBP keeping that word to support women boxing, the game of optical illusions is apparently doing moola illusions on the hearts and minds of the public. This year of 2011 is boxing heaven. Because this year will be the break-through year of the female fighter, boxing is going to be gettin' jiggy wid it! Holla!

brownsugar says:

when boxing returns to network tv in amateur or professional form... then we'll know it's back. but thanks for reminding me that womens boxing has been approved for the olympics RG... I'm sure the major networks won't be able to pass that up.

MisterLee says:

Yo Radam! i've seen that video before, but id' really like to know your record at some point, and even your identity! be free to message me! i'm a vault, but i can understand if you want to keep your anonymity. But will rewatch that video soon!

FighterforJC says:

[QUOTE=brownsugar;1041]New Heroes... we need em... as much as I enjoy watching the impecable, asthetically pleasing, and mellifluous execution of Floyd MayweatherJr, he's seems to drifting dangerously away from having any relevancy in the sport. And while Floyd slowly fades away from the scene Pacman is faced with the challenge of finding a marketable name in division he's basically all but cleaned out. This irony is compounded by promoters seeking to pit their fighters against names instead of able challengers. (as the author and TSS has already stated).... [B]But the root of the problem is that Boxing is no longer the key marquee sport of the olympics[/B]....[/QUOTE]

It started when they changed the scoring system after RJJ got robbed. Robberies happen all the time, but the rule change completely destroyed the essence of boxing, which is two warriors going at it to prove their supremacy. They didn't need to change the rules, they just needed to make sure they get the best judges. The new system turned boxing into a lifeless fencing match.